1:Williams E,G-5 (1923-1925) 1930
OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

belief seem with the native to merge into one another: they are too near extremes between which he may be said to shilly-shally. Therefore, when the time comes to be done with the ceremony for good and all, he takes the precaution of removing by a final purificatory rite all possible influences for evil which the *embabi* may have left in the initiates. The same explanation, it may be noted, is offered for the various rites, including the *suna*, observed by the man-slayer, who must rid himself of the peculiarly malignant spirit of the man he has slain.

The Otobu. It remains now to say something further of the *otobu*. I have already referred to the homicidal *otobu*, or *esa*, in Chapter XI, and described the rites observed in the bestowal of the ordinary *otobu* in the present chapter. It is now our task to consider the meaning—or the various meanings—of the word. The *otobu* may for the present be defined as one of a number of distinctive ornaments or objects which, at a price, are ceremonially bestowed, and which the recipient is thenceforward entitled to wear or use. It will be understood that any one who was, so to speak, masquerading with an *otobu* would be exposed to obloquy or ridicule. In earlier days it is doubtful whether any man would have had the hardihood or folly to attempt it. Where, therefore, one sees a man holding a highly ornamented lime gourd with a shell mouth-piece, or a string bag decorated with dogs' teeth, or wearing cuscus streamers tied at intervals with bunches of feathers, it may be concluded that he has paid the price for them (or probably that the price has been paid in his behalf) and that he is fully entitled to their use.

There is a considerable variety of these ceremonial objects, e.g. a specially ornamented *bo* or string bag (*eti* or *betava*), decorated spears or stone clubs, bone forks for eating, lime-pots, belts embroidered with *saima* shells or made of black creeper cord, cuscus streamers, &c. More commonly they take the form of ornaments (*bambo*) for the breast or forehead—hornbill beaks set in a half-circle, *gana*, *buave*, *bono*, and the like (*vide* p. 39). They are always fine examples of their kind, and in some cases are extremely

1:Williams E,G-5 (1923-1925) 1930
OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

its members. I have no concrete instance of this kind, and it seems likely that, as far as the Orokaiva are concerned, the offender would always find some supporters, and the result would be two parties confronting one another.

The Sanctions of Morality

It is clear that the sanctions of Orokaiva morality are something less solid than legal authority, and that there are virtually no guardians of the law. We may look for a supernatural guardian, i.e. for a supernatural sanction; but except within a limited field of conduct we should look in vain. By the supernatural sanction I mean the desire to please or the fear of offending any of those occult beings which are felt to possess more than human powers; and in Orokaiva religion, as we have seen, such beings are first and foremost, indeed almost exclusively, identified with the spirits of the dead, of whom the living stand in very real fear. The supernatural sanction, however, may be very briefly dismissed, for except in relation to semi-religious observances it cannot be said to exercise much influence. Though if we allowed a place in our list of native virtues to filial piety, even limited to piety of the posthumous kind, we should be dealing with what is truly one of the most important obligations in native conduct and one which is to a great extent dependent on the supernatural sanction. But this hardly comes within the scope of our present subject.

As for the sanctions which govern ordinary conduct, the relevant data point to a threefold division, viz. (1) the fear of retaliation, (2) the fear of public reprobation, and (3) the sympathetic sanction. These will be dealt with in turn, the last-mentioned obviously requiring some explanation.

Retaliation. This sanction naturally operates in regard to civil rather than criminal offences. Generally speaking, the retaliation will take either of two forms—direct violence or the more subtle method of sorcery; or, more correctly, retaliation is envisaged in either of these forms (for with physical retaliation no less than magical, the dread of it is out of all proportion to the actual practice of it). There is

1:Williams E,G-5 (1923-1925) 1930
OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

627 no lack of instances of retaliatory violence, however. In cases of adultery it was recognized as an ordinary thing; so much so that informants have reckoned the Government punishment of gaol as but a poor substitute for the old-fashioned use of spear and stone club. Not only was the co-respondent formerly liable to attack from the husband, but I have a case in which a husband, finding his wife *in delicto*, killed the woman while her lover made good his escape. Ordinary theft might lead to the same violent redress. A man, finding a woman stealing in his garden, immediately struck her on the back with a pineapple club; another, under similar provocation, entered the thief's house and hit him on the head with a stone. Interference with garden boundaries has been a fruitful cause of actual fighting, and informants have related how they fought one another with spears, clubs, and shields over this matter, though always, it has appeared, without fatal results. In another case the cause was a usurpation of fishing rights. Except for a complete absence of any formality or any rules of combat, these fights might be spoken of as duels. But it seems that the combatants are not bent on killing, nor are they altogether reluctant to be separated; and the most striking feature of such engagements is that they commonly end in a mutual exchange of gifts—pigs or dogs—by way of peace-making. In one or two cases the culprit has made no show of fight, but, very possibly from a sense of guilt and deserts received, has 'taken his medicine'. In certain of these private quarrels, again, the rest of the group have abstained from taking any part whatever, as if they approved of the act of vengeance; in which we may perhaps see one of the earliest steps toward legal punishment, i.e. the countenancing of the retaliatory act which eventually becomes the legalization of it.

626 The second kind of retaliation, viz. sorcery, exercises a still more important influence on conduct. The threats of it, which are not uncommon, and the dread of it which is ever-present, together make one of the most powerful deterrents against wrongdoing. A simple instance is seen in the protection marks described on pp. 323–4. It is true that these signs are often regarded or obeyed automatically

1:Williams E,G-5 (1923-1925) 1930
OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

and without any reflection or motive; again, they may be regarded out of pure consideration for the man—neighbour, relative, or friend—who has set them up; but there is an additional sanction, simply that of sorcery. The very name, *inja*, of one of these conventional signs is that of black magic, and if a native pauses to explain why he avoids trespassing beyond a *heri* or an *inja*, he will have but one explanation—the danger of sorcery. But sorcery is not merely a protector of property; it operates in all walks of life, a man will hesitate to wrong another in any way if he thinks of the crippled leg or the crop of boils which vengeance armed with magic may give him in return. In short, it is not worth elaborating what has been often enough observed, viz. that sorcery, despite being in itself the most hated of crimes, is undoubtedly, by reason of the superstitious fear it inspires, a stalwart guardian of individual rights.

Public Reprobation. Perhaps more important than the foregoing is the fear of public reprobation, which certainly does much to keep offenders in check, and that quite independently of any power of concrete punishment. The native is proverbially susceptible to the opinions of others, and Orokaiva feelings are no less tender than we might expect. Certain it is that the disapproval of his fellows—whether it take the form of anger, disgust, or ridicule—makes him extremely uncomfortable. Without insisting on the emotional instability which is probably a character of primitive minds, we may say with confidence of the Orokaiva that when his *ego* is exalted he is happy and contented; and that when it is thrust down he is miserable and certainly penitent. One may occasionally hear the evening harangues, in which some grievance is aired and recriminations are poured upon the wrongdoer. Since among primitives there are usually two sides (in the sense of mere numbers) to every question, it is usual to hear excited answers from more than one individual; but at other times the culprit must endure in shamefaced silence. There are times, I am assured, when the perpetrator of some wrong remains undiscovered and the victims do not know upon whom to vent their indignation. Then the proper object of it may hide his guilt and even

1:Williams E,G-5 (1923-1925) 1930
OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

626 add his voice to the uproar, saying, 'What scoundrel could have stolen your taro?' But it is perhaps more usual for him to own up and reinstate himself in public favour by a gift in conciliation. There are other ways of expressing public disapproval or of punishing the offender by holding him up to ridicule. When a man finds his coco-nuts stolen he may tie a fragment of husk to a stick and set it up on the track near his palms: then every one will see that a theft has been committed, and the thief, even though his identity remain unknown, will feel a pang of shame whenever he passes the spot. Similarly, the owner of a ravaged garden will affix a taro leaf to a coco-nut palm in the midst of the village for all to see and for the special discomfort of the culprit. These devices, like the wearing of the *herutu* in the armlet (p. 116), are a means of advertising a wrong and thereby of striking shame into the heart of the man who has committed it.

It is this sanction of public reprobation that reacts especially upon the more ideal virtues such as liberality, dignity, helpfulness, and the rest, where sins of omission are not liable to any concrete punishment.

The Sympathetic Sanction. There remains one highly important sanction. The wrongdoer, as we have seen, cannot endure the bad opinion of his fellows at large, but neither can he endure to see the pain or feel the anger and enmity of the man he has wronged. This in itself is quite irrespective of public opinion, though of course a personal wrong, if discovered, will bring down the weight of public censure as well as the enmity of the victim upon its perpetrator. To be short, I believe that this last sanction is simply the fear of hurting the feelings of one's fellow man, i.e. of one's fellow man in the limited native sense of a member of the sympathy-group. It is, in fact, what has been noted by other observers as an amiable native trait, viz. a natural consideration for others' feelings.[1] It goes hand in hand with a desire

[1] 'Intellectually the Papuan is not nearly so far inferior to ourselves as many people suppose him to be; and in manners he is often our superior. "It is a common experience among travellers that many, if not all, savages are gentlemen." I am quoting from Dr. Haddon's Conway Memorial Lecture on "The Practical Value of Ethnology", and, if by the word "gentleman" is meant a man who has a regard

1:Williams E,G-5 (1923-1925) 1930
OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

to keep on friendly terms with the other members of the sympathy-group, and I shall refer to it as the Sympathetic Sanction. This considerateness is constantly evinced in daily life, e.g. by a reticence regarding the peculiarities of one's neighbours, by an absence of any cruel competitive spirit by which one man seeks profit at another's expense, even by the reluctance to exercise compulsion on another individual; and I believe that the common regard for property rights is supported by this sanction more strongly than by the fear of retaliation or of public censure, which are rather in the nature of reinforcements; for Orokaiva property, for instance, is nearly always safe from the thief even when he is absolutely free from the risk of detection, and I believe he respects it primarily out of consideration for its owner.

But it is from the negative instances that we may most safely deduce the value of the sympathetic sanction; that is to say, when the sanction has failed to work and some personal offence has been committed, we may observe the psychological effect upon the offender. In such an event the offender is amply punished by being thoroughly sorry for his victim and thoroughly ashamed of himself. We may consider a simple instance (though in our eyes a somewhat extraordinary one), viz. when a man inadvertently uses the name of his brother-in-law, which the Orokaiva regards as a very grave insult. The unfortunate offender will throw his hands up with a despairing gesture and hang his head in shame and confusion which are truly comical to behold; while the brother-in-law, if he chance to have overheard, will be deeply offended and, strangely enough, covered with equal shame. The matter can only be mended by a gift.

The conciliatory gift is a characteristic way of compensating for personal wrong. In a case previously referred to (p. 186), where a man had given a youth some feathers to wear before his formal investiture with the *kokumbari*, and

for the feelings of others, I think that the statement is generally true of the Papuan' (Sir Hubert Murray, *Papua of To-day*, p. 225). Upon looking up this passage I was so struck by its appositeness to the present chapter, that I suspect it must have had something to do with shaping the general views expressed therein, more indeed than I realized when writing.

1:Williams E,G-5 (1923-1925) 1930
OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

627 by so doing had offended the boy's relatives, he immediately
431 sought to make amends. He left the village, but presently came striding back with a half-grown pig across his shoulders; holding the animal by the hind legs he swung it round and dashed its head against the butt of a coco-nut palm, and then flung it dead at the feet of the man he had offended. Not many moments after, I saw one of the latter's brothers enter the village with a fine dog on his shoulders and go through precisely the same performance, killing it against the same tree and offering it as a return present. The pay-back of the conciliatory gift is indeed almost the regular thing: there are numerous instances of quarrels and fights over such matters as theft or interference with garden boundaries, which have been settled eventually by an exchange of pigs, not only the offender but the victim also showing a genuine desire to resume friendly relations. It is
626 not to be supposed, of course, that the sympathetic sanction
152 is infallible. The man who does wrong to another no doubt often 'gets away with it', remaining undetected and perhaps suffering few regrets; but there is no question that he is often exceedingly contrite. It would almost seem that the victim plays upon the feelings of the offender to secure this result, though it would not do invariably to attribute any such definite intention to a man who is deeply affected by a sense of wrong. But the Orokaiva can on occasion be very sorry for himself, and it would seem that he wants others to be sorry for him, and particularly the man who has wronged him. His attitude is not so much 'I'll make you sorry for what you have done' as 'I'll make you sorry for me'; and so he takes 'the revenge of being injured'. Accordingly we find a person under a sense of wrong going to extraordinary lengths of self-castigation, from merely fasting or running away from home for a while, to delivering himself up to an enemy tribe or hanging himself from a tree. I have seen a dozen water-melons hacked into fragments and strewn upon the track. Their owner, finding one of them stolen, had demolished the whole crop and carried them to the path where the thief, whose identity he did not know, would pass and realize what he had done. Similarly I have seen a young

1:Williams E,G-5 (1923-1925) 1930
OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

man return home at evening and find one of his spears taken from his verandah; when his inquiries failed to trace his spear he took an axe and razed his house to the ground before the eyes of the whole village. Such an attitude of mind has a definite name, *sisira*, and is indeed very often to be met with. Composed, I imagine, largely of anger and self-pity, it does not fail to excite a response in the impressionable heart of the man whose offence has caused it. He is affected with *meh*, that complex state of mind which, following the lead of pidgin English, I have elsewhere translated 'shame'. But whereas in the *meh* caused by public reprobation the predominant emotion is self-abasement, there is in the *meh* that results from a sense of having wronged a fellow man a definite admixture of pity. However, the culprit is very effectively 'put to shame', and very unpleasant he finds it.

The sympathetic sanction is therefore no more than the fear of injuring the feelings of any member of the sympathy-group; and I cannot but regard this as a fundamental motive. In fact there would appear to be a very definite *sentiment of friendliness* toward all members of the group, as on the other hand there is a definite *sentiment of enmity* toward all those who are outside its pale. I will not venture to debate the question of the instinctive bases of these two opposite sentiments, nor the question of whether they may not be instinctive reactions in themselves. But for the present discussion it seems that the sentiment of friendliness is fundamental, requiring no ulterior explanation, and that it is a natural guarantee of morality because it implies a desire not to hurt the feelings of those to whom it extends, i.e. it provides the sympathetic sanction.

The Moral Sense

Lastly there arises the question whether our native may be said to have a moral sense. Naturally he possesses no idea of morality in the abstract; he does not set up good conduct as an ideal, and is certainly free from any charge of priggishness. On the contrary, his good conduct is for the most part unreflective, a matter of routine; so that every

3: Reay E-4, 5 (1951) 1953 OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

Conclusion

In conclusion, it could be said that the Orokaiva have a fairly weak system of social control. The sanctions against wrongdoing are all diffuse, and do not always work successfully. There seems to be a complete absence of any effective judicial system. A thief or a murdering sorcerer has to be caught in the act to be punished at all. There is no machinery for discovering the culprit.[10] In a domestic crisis, a woman will "retaliate" by leaving her husband ostensibly with no one to cook for him, but it is easy for him to find someone willing to do his cooking. He does this by invoking pity. If a situation is unbearable, an individual can always leave the village. A woman can go to her kinsfolk, and a man to his *naname's* village.

The only person an Orokaiva can punish effectively is himself. There seems to be a good deal of impotent rage in the destruction of a man's own property in a fit of *sisira*. Also, the wronged man is sorry for himself, and he ensures that everyone else, including the person who wronged him, feels sorry for him, too. The masochistic sanction of self-injury, with the purpose of invoking the criminal's pity, is in direct contrast to the outward aggression of the Orokaiva's traditional relations with the hostile Tagaho and Managalasi. It is possible that the weakness of the internal judicial system was originally due to the necessity for keeping overt aggression geared towards the enemy groups. To maintain constant warfare with outsiders, internal aggression had to be severely limited, even aggression towards wrongdoers. Hence, perhaps, the unwillingness to ferret out the culprit when a theft occurs or a person dies from sorcery, unless the criminal is actually caught in the act.

The relationship between institutionalized friendship and social control is ambiguous. A man's *naname* are his contemporaries who were secluded with him in the *oro* during his initiation, and other friends he may acquire later. Every man has many *naname* scattered throughout neighbouring and distant villages. Being somebody's *naname* constitutes a bond which overrides all other considerations. A man's loyalty to his *naname* is said to be stronger than his loyalty to his family and his relatives. Although, theoretically, a man who is *olohu* never quarrels and brawls, if he is involved in brawls in defence of a *naname* he is paradoxically judged to be more *olohu* than ever. So strong is the bond between *naname* that in fact men cannot conceive of committing offences against anyone who stands in this relationship to them.[11] This attitude tends to be extended to friends of a man's *naname*, so normally there are very few people in the community who are potential victims of, say, a man's impulse to steal. Considered as an instrument of social control, institutionalized friendship minimizes the possibility of deviance.

Formerly, the conduct of wars and cannibal raids was determined largely by this institution. The Koropata people who went to help their allies at Isivita in a

[10] L. A. Flint (*Papuan Annual Report*, 1924–25, p. 43) describes various ways of tracing the sorcerer, but says nothing of the effectiveness of these methods. Certainly in 1951 the Wasida and Koropata people seemed sceptical of these methods and said that they did not bother trying to discover the sorcerer by these means.

[11] One informant went so far as to say that if a man were to discover that he had committed some offence against his *naname* "by mistake," he would kill himself.